

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1-15 are amended for clarity only and claims 16-18 are added. In particular, the term "attribute" is amended to "concept." This is supported by the specification on page 62, line 5-9, for example. No new matter is introduced.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative, Mr. Paul Tsou, during the July 16, 2007 personal interview. The substance of the personal interview is incorporated in the remarks below.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Masamichi et al. (JP 2003-085347). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

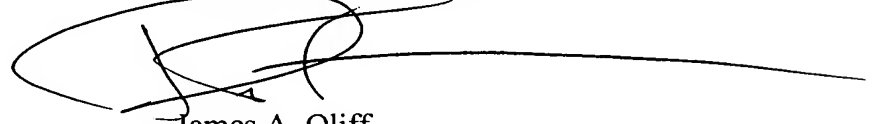
The Office Action asserts that Masamichi discloses an inquiry unit configured to direct inquiries to the plurality of groups, citing paragraphs [0022], [0026] and [0046]. However, as discussed during the interview, these cited paragraphs do not disclose or suggest an inquiry unit. Instead, paragraph [0022] is referring to the types of communication that exists between two or more subjects. Paragraph [0026] is referring to a reading control section 10 that reads the organization communication group, and paragraph [0046] refers to an analysis method. In fact, there is nothing in Masamichi that discloses or suggests an inquiry unit as recited in claim 1 and equivalently recited in claims 6 and 11. Thus, Masamichi does not disclose the subject matter recited in claims 1, 6 and 11.

Claims 2-5 depend from claim 1, claims 7-10 depend from claim 6 and claims 12-15 depend from claim 11. Accordingly, Masamichi does not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claims 1-15. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully solicited. Claims 16-18 are patentable for the same reasons discussed above in connection with claims 1-15.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-18 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: July 16, 2007

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